the procedure for taking the views of the Kashmiri people into account, should come out of the bilateral talks between India and Pakistan; and

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a Press-guidance on South Asia issued by US-Administration in response to controversy about President Clinton's letter to a Pro-Pakistani Kashmiri militants outfit; if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

Government have noted the clarification issued by the State Department. Government reiterate that Jammu and Kashmir is and shall remain an integral part of India; Government is ready to pursue bilateral dialogue with Pakistan to resolve peacefully all outstanding disputes in the framework of the Simla Agreement. Government remain alert to all development which impact on India's national interest and are committed to take all necessary steps to safeguard India's territorial unity and integrity.

States recording maximum issuance of passports

*211. SHRIMATI SATYA BAHIN:

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the names of the first five States from maximum number of passports were issued during the last three years and what is the number of passport so issued;

(b) what are the reasons for such high issuance of passports;

(c) whether Government have received complaints of delay and harassment in these States; and

(d) what steps are being taken to reduce delays and harassments?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINTSH SINGH): (a) statement is placed on the Table of the House.

(b) The number of applications received from States has been high and Government have made efforts to increase the output of passports.

(c) and (d) Government receive complaints about matters relating to passport issue including delay and harassment from these and other States. Specific complaints of harassment are investigated and when necessary appropriate necessary action is taken Government have taken a number of steps to reduce delays and expedite the issue of passports which, inter alia, include augmentation of staff strength, increase in the supply of passport booklets, streamlining of procedures and the introduction of a productivity linked incentive scheme.

Statement

	I	II	III	IV	V
1991	Maharashtra (253503)	Kerala (248249)	Tamil Nadu (204261)	*	AP (147614)
1992	Kerala (500016)	Maharashtra (294553)	AP (264131)	Tamil Nadu (246040)	UP (189404)
1993	Kerala (718854)	Tamil Nadu (523263)	Maharashtra (222370)	AP (215090)	**

*includes passports issued by

PO Jalandhar : 110185 as well as by

RPO Chandigarh : 79354. The RPO Chandigarh covers 9 districts of Punjab besides the Union Territory of Chandigarh and the States of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana

TOTAL : 189539

**includes passports issued by

PO Jalandhar : 110070 as well as by

RPO Chandigarh : 95554. The RPO Chandigarh covers 9 districts of Punjab besides the Union Territory of Chandigarh and the States of Himachal Pradesh and Haryana

TOTAL : 205624

Posts lying vacant in Ahmedabad Regional Passport Office

*212. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of posts are lying vacant in the Regional Passport Office at Ahmedabad since a long period and public work relating to early documentation and clearance has been suffering;

(b) if so, what posts are still lying vacant category wise as on date;

(c) what steps have been taken by Government in this regard;